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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KIEV 002247

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PINR](#) [UP](#)  
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: SEA BREEZE JUNE 8 UPDATE

REF: A. KIEV 2208  
[1](#)B. KIEV 2207  
[1](#)C. KIEV 2190

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Sheila Gwaltney for reasons 1.4  
(b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Defense Minister Hrytsenko defended his ministry's preparations for the U.S.-Ukraine bilateral military exercise Sea Breeze and determined, with the UK Embassy Defense Attache, that the joint Ukraine-UK Lone Knot exercise would need to be cancelled. Parliament's provisional presidium decided against holding a special session, which meant that the Rada would not consider authorization for international military exercises before June 14. Party of Regions MP Hanna Herman said Party of Regions leader Yanukovych intervened to ask certain Regions MPs to soften their statements. Although Yanukovych decided against visiting Crimea, a group of mostly Regions and SDPU(o) MPs arrived in Crimea June 8 to support demonstrators protesting the U.S. military presence, and two Regions MPs gained access to USG containers at the port containing ammunition for the Sea Breeze exercise. The June 8 crowd of demonstrators in Feodosiya was larger than normal. End summary.

DefMin's Defense  
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[1](#)2. (C) In a June 7 meeting with DATT and UK Embassy DATT, Defense Minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko reiterated the importance of Sea Breeze to Ukraine, saying that President Yushchenko had endorsed the National Security and Defense Council's decision to continue preparations for Sea Breeze, and defended the Ministry of Defense's preparation for the exercise. Hrytsenko said relevant authorities were properly informed well in advance, including a briefing to the Crimean Autonomous Republic officials and Feodosiya's mayor. There had also been articles in the regional press and tours of the exercise areas. Hrytsenko and the UK DATT determined that the Ukraine-UK Lone Knot bilateral exercise could not take place according to schedule; they discussed coordination of a press release regarding Lone Knot's cancellation for 2006. Lone Knot was scheduled to start next week.

Parliament's Status  
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[1](#)3. (SBU) Parliament's (Rada) provisional presidium voted June 8 against a motion from 176 Rada deputies (mostly, if not all, Regions Party deputies) to hold a special Rada session. Party of Regions Parliamentary Deputy Volodymyr Makeyenko told us that, in the event, technical reasons would have prevented the holding of an extraordinary Rada session. First, the Rada Speaker convoked special sessions, and there currently was no Speaker. Second, according to Article 12 of

the Rada Rules of Procedure, the parliamentary gazette must publish an announcement regarding the special session three working days beforehand and, with the June 12 Holy Trinity holiday, the next scheduled Rada session on June 14 was now only two working days away.

#### Embassy Action

14. (C) Charge spoke June 8 with both Bloc Yuliya Tymoshenko MP Andriy Shkil and Party of Regions MP Hanna Herman to underscore our concerns about Rada deputies intruding into the sanatorium housing the U.S. military reservists after acting Defense Minister Leonid Polyakov told us that Yanukovych and Shkil planned trips today to Feodosiya. Shkil made clear that he supported Ukraine's NATO aspirations as the only choice for its future. While he said he was not planning a trip to Crimea, he could see the value of an MP visit that he could lead in his capacity as the former head of delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Herman, like her Party of Regions colleague Leonid Kozhara (ref A), stressed that Party of Regions and its leader Viktor Yanukovych continued to support Ukrainian cooperation with NATO; Regions opposition in this case was aimed at the Ukrainian government's unconstitutional actions in allowing foreign military to enter Ukrainian territory. She said the fact that Yanukovych and Regions MP Raisa Bohatyreva, contrary to some media reports, did not go to Crimea spoke for itself and opined that only a meeting between Yanukovych and President Yushchenko had the potential to defuse the controversy. She said Yanukovych was following the situation in Crimea closely and had asked certain Regions MPs to soften their statements. Charge reminded Herman that Regions deputies continued to demand access to the Marines and to

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U.S. exercise cargo at the port. Regions deputies and flags were also prominent at the continuing demonstrations outside the Feodosiya sanatorium. Herman promised to relay our concerns to Yanukovych.

#### Further Crimean Developments

15. (U) Despite Yanukovych's decision to stay put, Ukrainska Pravda reported June 8 that a group of more than 20 Regions MPs (and also including Crimean Parliament MP Nestor Shufrych from the SDPU(o)-led Ne Tak bloc) had arrived in Crimea to provide moral support to the demonstrators. MP Yevhen Kushnaryov said the group intended to thank Crimeans for "protecting the Ukrainian constitution and Ukrainian sovereignty." The group would also ensure the welfare of the demonstrators and that the authorities did not infringe on their rights. Kushnaryov said any attempts to limit the rights of free speech and assembly would be severely punished. According to a later news report, a group of 300-350 demonstrators drawn from Regions, the Progressive Socialist Party, the Russian bloc, and Union (Soyuz) party gathered before the Feodosiya port to demonstrate and greet the MP delegation. Shortly thereafter, a group of 15 pro-democracy Pora Party activists unfurled party flags and banners with slogans such as "NATO is Ukraine's guarantee," sparking a scuffle between the two groups. The Pora flags and banners were torn.

16. (U) The June 7 (Wednesday) evening protest in front of the main gate of the sanatorium was the larger than normal with 300 to 400 participants. A non-violent crowd of mostly older people with some younger participants chanted, listened to speeches and played music. The crowd swelled further the following day, June 8. Interfax reported the number of demonstrators was 1,500, but RSO on the ground estimated the crowd at 800-1,000. RSO said the demonstrators appeared to include a larger percentage of young people, perhaps bussed in from other locations such as Sevastopol and Odesa. A larger crowd might also have been attracted by Yanukovych's

rumored arrival.

¶7. (U) RSO reported Kushanaryov addressed the crowd by first apologizing that Yanukovych had been unable to appear personally, then reported he had seen open containers with contents evidently missing during his visit to the port. He vowed to open a parliamentary investigation to account for the cargo. RSO also reported that inflammatory leaflets bearing Progressive Socialist Party leader Nataliya Vitrenko's picture were circulating. One leaflet had Hitler giving a Nazi salute to a NATO soldier holding an axe before a river of blood with heads and arms appearing and labeled "Yugoslavia," "Afghanistan," and "Iraq." Another leaflet had a NATO soldier with a bloody knife next to a prostrate figure labeled "Mother Ukraine."

¶8. (U) Visit Embassy Kiev's classified website:  
[www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kiev).  
Gwaltney